GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2489
ANSWERED ON:14.12.2015
Artefacts in Museums Abroad
Singh Shri Rakesh

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2489
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AGRAHAYANA 23, 1937 (SAKA).

ARTEFACTS IN MUSUEMS ABROAD

+2489. SHRI RAKESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that many statues/sculptures of religious importance/artefacts belonging to India are kept in museums around the world and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether historical and archaeological experts have been sent to the different museums around the world for their verification and if so, the result thereof;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to bring back the said statues/sculptures;

(d) the difficulties being faced by the Government in bringing back the statues/sculptures; and

(e) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) AND MINISTER OF STATE , CIVIL AVIATION

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) There are five instances during the last three years of statue/sculpture of Indian origin being traced to different museums of the world. Details are as annexure I.

(b) The experts are sent abroad for verification of the object to ascertain the authenticity and genuineness of the artefacts as an antiquity.

(c) All efforts possible within the parameters of the UNESCO Convention of 1970, to which India is signatory, are made by the Archaeological Survey of India to bring back the object/sculpture covered under the definition of Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972 and exported in violation of above Act.

(d) The basic difficulty faced for the retrieval of the object is to prove the ownership/provenance in absence of FIR or theft report lodged against the object.

(e) All precautionary measures are taken up by way of providing round the clock duty, deploying additional security personnel at various monument/site and museums liasoning with law enforcing agencies etc. to avoid theft of the object in future. For non-registered antiquities a certificate of non-antiquity has to be obtained by the exporter from Archaeological Survey of India before the object leaves India. Central Government has approved National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities during XIIth Five Year Plan with the objective to create a national database of monuments and antiquities in a uniform template.

Annexure I

Detail of the objects surface abroad during last three years and action taken by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Sl.No. Name of the Museums Statue/sculpture Acton taken

1. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Bronze image of Nataraja Brought back to India
2. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Stone image of Ardhanarishwara Brought back to India
3. Linden Museum, Stuttguart, Germany Stone image of Durga Brought back to India
4. Asian Civilization Museum, Singapore Metal image of Uma Parameshwari Handed over by the Museum Authorities to ASI
5. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra Stone image of Seated Buddha Team of the experts has been finalized to examine the object